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FM AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT  
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RUCNMGH/MAGHREB COLLECTIVE  
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RUEHDK/AMEMBASSY DAKAR 7181  
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RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO 0665  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 1114

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 NOUAKCHOTT 000345

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/20/2019

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [KDEM](#) [MR](#)

SUBJECT: OULD DADDAH'S RESERVATIONS: THE SENEGALESE WANT A  
COSMETIC SOLUTION

REF: NOUAKCHOTT 342

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Classified By: Classified by Ambassador Mark M. Boulware, for reasons 1  
.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Summary: According to RFD President Ahmed Ould Daddah, anti-coup forces are currently on standby following a May 20 meeting with Senegalese mediators. The opposition has still not received a firm response regarding pre-conditions for continued negotiations. If the response to their demands is positive, further meetings may be held on the evening of May 20. Ould Daddah expressed reservations about the mediation, stating that the Senegalese were more interested in a "cosmetic solution" than a consensual solution that tackled the real issues and that led to free and fair elections. The FNDD's and RFD's positions seem to be unified and firm meanwhile General Aziz remains publicly committed to June 6 elections but has delayed the start of his campaign by 24 hours End summary.

¶2. (C) Ambassador met May 20 with Daddah for an update on the Senegalese mediation. Daddah, like FNDD co-leader and UFP President Mohamed Ould Maouloud, stressed the importance of liberating the political prisoners and suspending the electoral agenda as pre-conditions for negotiations.

¶3. (C) Daddah confirmed information provided earlier by Maouloud that Senegalese Foreign Minister Cheikh Tidiane Gadio had disclosed he was encountering problems with the Libyans (Reftel). He said Gadio wanted to know if he could count on the Mauritians to move forward with the mediation.

¶4. (C) A meeting took place May 20 between Daddah, Maouloud and the mediation delegation composed of Gadio, AU Peace and Security Commissioner Ramtane Lamamra, UN SRSG for West Africa Said Djinnit and Muammar Qadhafi's special envoy Ravi Al-Madani. The mediators insisted on a joint FNDD/RFD face-to-face meeting with Aziz's group. The opposition refused, as they are afraid Aziz's camp would exploit such a meeting in the press to their advantage. The FNDD and RFD stressed the importance of Aziz fulfilling their

pre-conditions before starting to negotiate a solution. Daddah also agreed with Maouloud that a delay in the elections was necessary to revise the electoral lists, to form the electoral college, and do everything necessary to ensure the elections would be free and transparent. This in itself would represent a delay of at least five months, according to him. Forming a government of national unity would also take at least 15 days. For Daddah, a minimum of six months would be necessary to guarantee a free and transparent election, but he would be willing to accept five months instead of six as a concession to Aziz. Daddah also pointed out the problem of the Presidential Security Battalion (BASEP) and how to ensure it becomes a unit focused on providing presidential security and not regime security.

15. (C) "They want to come up with a cosmetic solution," stated Daddah. According to Daddah, Aziz currently has two choices -- imposing his own solution or accepting the start of an equitable and reasonable dialogue. Daddah stressed that the RFD and the FNDD will not let themselves be used to legitimize Aziz's election. Note: Aziz held a press conference the afternoon of May 20 stating that the election will not be delayed and that the campaign would start on May 21 in Kiffa. However, he did offer a token concession, saying he would delay his own campaign for 24 hours to "give the talks a chance." The other three presidential candidates will begin their campaigns at midnight on May 21 as originally planned. End note.

16. (C) "We are currently on standby," summarized Daddah. The mediators said they would call back with an answer about the pre-conditions and, if the response was positive, they could have meetings later in the evening. He pointed out

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that Gadio seemed more reasonable and understood both parties had to make concessions. Daddah, like Maouloud, wants the international community, particularly the United States and the European Union, to provide guarantees for a consensual solution. "We cannot accept a guarantee from a neighboring country," he said. The Ambassador responded that he could not commit the USG as a guarantor but reassured Daddah of the US's desire to be useful. He affirmed that the US wants to see a consensual solution to the crisis and that elections resulting from a consensus should be held as soon as humanly possible.

17. (C) Daddah asked the Ambassador to approach his French counterpart. He said the French could be influential as one of their agents was a close Aziz advisor. Comment: Local press accuses First Secretary and DGSE member Jean-Michel Antona at the Embassy of France of counseling Aziz. End comment.

18. (C) Comment: Although both Daddah and the FNDD's Maouloud highlight the lack of progress on the release of political prisoners and the suspension of the unilateral election campaign, they admitted that they were waiting to be called back for further negotiations on the evening of May 20 and reports indicate that further talks did take place. There are still no visible signs of an imminent deal but neither have talks yet broken down. While there may be some behind the scenes progress, the various players are also likely to be maneuvering to shift the blame for any eventual failure. End comment.  
BOULWARE